

any part of the kingdom, and so everlastingly disenable you. I besaught him not to deal so, in regard of a poor town; and here he stopt me in what I was going on to say. A poor town! you have made a company of seditious, factious bedlams, and what do you prate to me of a poor town? I prayed him to suffer me to catechise in the Sabbath days in the afternoon; he replied, spare your breath, I will have no such fellows prate in my diocess; get you gone, and now make your complaints to whom your will? So away I went, and blessed be God that I may go to him. (Thus did this bishop, a professed disciple of the meek and lowly Jesus, treat one of the most pious, humble, diligent and faithful young ministers in the Church of England in this day.)

In this tirade the future archbishop deals in language quite as coarse as anything used by Milton against Salmasius or Morus.

Dr. EVERETT further said that a defence had been found by our late associate Samuel R. Gardiner for the tyranny of Laud, Strafford, and their master on the ground that they were all entirely honest, but failed to understand the English people of their day. This does not better the case. It is the business of men in positions of such authority to understand their nation; to ask themselves every day whether they do understand it, especially when they find their favorite measures opposed. Pym, Hampden, Cromwell, and Milton had so understood Englishmen; it might be said that Clarendon, royalist as he was, saw far clearer than the King what the nation would stand.

It is a pleasant contrast to see how completely the present King of England understands the people he rules, and how admirably he plays his part, both at home and abroad, for this very reason.

JAMES SCHOULER, a Corresponding Member, read the following paper:

ABRAHAM LINCOLN AT TREMONT TEMPLE IN 1848.

It is matter of history that in September, 1848, Abraham Lincoln visited Boston and vicinity to make political speeches for the Whig candidate, General Zachary Taylor, during the presidential campaign of that year; and that on the evening of the 22d he appeared on the same platform with William H. Seward of New York, at Tremont Temple, to address a



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large Whig audience gathered in this city.<sup>1</sup> So far as I am aware, however, the details of that visit have never been explored, and the object of the present paper is to set them forth as fully as the authentic information still accessible may permit. For this was the only political visit, and indeed the only genuine visit at all, that this foremost among our nineteenth-century Americans ever made to Massachusetts.

Lincoln was at this stage of his career a Whig member of Congress in the House, and in fact the only Whig representative at all from Illinois who served in the thirtieth Congress. That service for a single term of two years was his only one before he returned to Washington in 1861 to become President of the United States during the most perilous crisis of our history. He did not stand for reelection to the House in 1848, and his district reverted to the Democrats at a polling held shortly before he came to Boston,<sup>2</sup> while he lingered in Washington, franking documents and corresponding with political friends.

Before turning westward, through New York State, to his distant home in Illinois, Lincoln came to Massachusetts as a campaign orator, after making a few speeches in Maryland. His first public appearance here was at Worcester, September 12, 1848, on the evening which preceded the Whig State convention held Wednesday in that city, where the well-beloved George N. Briggs was renominated for Governor and State electors at large were fixed upon for the Whig presidential ticket. His final speech of this tour was at Boston on Friday the 22d, — that Tremont-Temple occasion to which I refer. Hence Lincoln's present visit to Massachusetts occupied some ten days in all, most of which time he must have passed in Boston and its close vicinity.

The initial speech at Worcester was before a crowded audience at City Hall and aroused much enthusiasm. On the next forenoon, September 13, Lincoln was one of several who spoke out-of-doors from a temporary stand erected near the railroad station; and confusion being made by the arrival of Whig del-

<sup>1</sup> J. Schouler, *History of the United States*, v. 112, note; J. G. Nicolay and J. Hay, *Abraham Lincoln, a History*, i. 281.

<sup>2</sup> But he aided in carrying this Congressional district for Taylor in the following November.

egations from different parts of the State with their brass bands, speakers and audience joined presently in marching to the convention hall to attend proceedings. Levi Lincoln of Worcester, ripe in Whig honors, was probably present at this convention and his name headed the electoral list; while Rufus Choate and Robert C. Winthrop made the chief speeches to the assembled delegates.

Next in order, so far as the Boston newspapers record his movements, Abraham Lincoln addressed the Boston Whig Club on Friday, September 15, at their headquarters on Bromfield Street. On Monday evening, the 18th, he took part with other orators at Dorchester, and on Tuesday he spoke at Chelsea. Wednesday afternoon, the 20th, he attended a Whig ratification meeting called in Dedham, but had to cut short his speech in order to meet a more pressing engagement in the evening at Cambridge, where as the chief speaker in a Whig rally held at City Hall he made a powerful impression upon a large and intelligent audience. Two nights later came Boston's memorable Whig gathering at Tremont Temple in which this tour culminated. Not only did civic voters turn out that evening in full strength to welcome and applaud their two great champions from States west of New England, but Whig clubs and committee men from a considerable distance were also in attendance. Seward, lately Governor of the Empire State and soon to become one of its United States senators, seems to have been the favorite of the occasion, taking precedence in the programme; but Lincoln made good his own performance at the close. His speech, interrupted by shouts of laughter and approving exclamations, was cheered to the echo at its end, and the meeting broke up at nearly half past ten, with hearty and repeated rounds of applause for both speakers and the Whig candidate. Applications came to Boston the next day from various parts of the State to secure this bright and breezy orator for other political meetings; but it was announced in the press that he had already started homeward for Illinois and the West, leaving Boston and Massachusetts by railway train the very next morning.

Lincoln's unique figure and physiognomy must have impressed his audiences on this brief visit. The "Boston Daily Advertiser" of September 14, in reporting his speech of the



12th at Worcester, described him as "a very tall and thin figure, with an intellectual face, showing a searching mind, and a cool judgment. He spoke in a clear and cool, and very eloquent manner, for an hour and a half, carrying the audience with him in his able arguments and brilliant illustrations — only interrupted by warm and frequent applause." An enthusiastic hearer of his Cambridge speech thus wrote of him to "The Boston Daily Atlas" of the 22d, "Mr. Lincoln . . . is a capital specimen of a 'Sucker' <sup>1</sup> Whig, six feet at least in his stockings, and every way worthy to represent that Spartan band of the only Whig district in poor benighted Illinois." Later, I may add, in early 1860, when Lincoln made his famous Cooper Institute speech on February 27, "Burleigh," <sup>2</sup> a New York correspondent of the "Boston Daily Journal," of the 29th, sketched him humorously as "tall, slim, lank, rather queer, with an unmistakably Yankee look — dresses like a Connecticut deacon — with a voice fife and shrill." That "Yankee look," upon which our novelist Hawthorne commented when he saw Lincoln still later at the White House,<sup>3</sup> and which made him seem, even to unfamiliar Eastern men, some kinsman not remote of their own rural neighborhoods, fixed deeply the beholder in Massachusetts even thus early in 1848; for we find "The Daily [Boston] Chronotype" of September 23, whose Free-soil editor was of the bitter and biting sort, making contemptuous allusion to "Mr. Abram Lincoln," on his present visit, as "the suckerized Yankee."

Our Illinois campaigner occupied an hour or an hour and a half in the political speeches of this ten days' tour, when given his full opportunity, and it seems quite certain that the staple of all those speeches was alike. Party contemporaries agree that this stranger from the West spoke with perfect coolness and self-possession; that he was clear and logical in argument, plain, cogent, and to the point; that his illustrations were apt and told upon his hearers with capital effect; and that he invariably carried his audience with him, interrupted

<sup>1</sup> Defined in the Century Dictionary as a "cant name for an inhabitant of Illinois." See also Bartlett's Dictionary of Americanisms.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. Matthew Hale Smith.

<sup>3</sup> Hawthorne's account of his visit to Washington in March, 1862, under the title "Chiefly about War-Matters. By a peaceable man," appeared in "The Atlantic Monthly" for July, 1862, x. 43-61.

by sympathetic applause, and concluding his remarks usually in a strain of earnest and persuasive eloquence.

As for our Tremont-Temple occasion, more particularly, on Friday, September 22, the Boston committee in charge had found it difficult to secure a hall for the meeting, and hence proposed to hold the Whig rally in Court Square behind the City Hall. But the weather proved threatening and unpropitious for an open-air gathering, and hence Tremont Temple was procured through special effort, announcement being made by noon of such a change in the arrangements. The building itself of that date occupied the same convenient site on Tremont Street as the present Temple, and afforded the same unique combination of religious and secular revenues to finance a plain congregation of Christian people. Its chief hall, with convenient galleries, could seat a large audience then as now, while at the rear of its broad platform stood an organ with gilded pipes, leaving ample space in front for a full chorus choir. This hall was filled early, that Friday evening, by the great Whig gathering which listened to the two orators from New York and Illinois. The meeting was called to order by William Hayden at eight o'clock. George Lunt was chosen chairman of the meeting, and Ezra Lincoln, Jr., secretary.

Faneuil Hall had been appropriated, most of this same week, for an exhibition of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, which closed, this Friday evening, with a grand banquet, at which some twelve hundred persons were present, both ladies and gentlemen.<sup>1</sup> A band of music enlivened the exercises, and among the post-prandial speakers were Winthrop and Mayor Quincy, whose venerable father was also present. President Marshall P. Wilder of the Society officiated as host. Boston's Music Hall was not yet in existence. The Whigs secured Tremont Temple for their political meeting only through the courtesy of a Dr. Colton, who was showing there at this time a large painting by Rembrandt Peale called "The Court of Death," which occupied three hundred and twelve square feet of canvas and contained twenty-three figures of life size. That exhibition, with Dr. Colton's descriptive lecture, was kindly intermitted for this particular evening, and most likely

<sup>1</sup> Boston Post, September 23, 1848.

the great gruesome picture itself was in the rear of the orators, decently draped for the occasion.

Boston was at this time a strongly Whig city of energy and sobriety, ruled ably and honestly by social leaders of good New England stock, the native Protestant element predominating. Among the city ordinances was one which forbade smoking in the streets. It chanced that metropolitan New York was about this time proposing to confer upon a young sailor "the freedom of the city," in recognition of his gallant behavior at sea during a shipwreck; and the question being widely discussed by the press what this privilege meant, a correspondent of the "Daily Evening Transcript" — that favorite sheet already of tea-table readers and writers, albeit more nearly of a napkin's size to hold in hand than it is now — suggested that "freedom of the city" meant permission to light one's pipe or cigar when he went out walking. It was on October 25th of this year, 1848, that Boston's great celebration occurred, upon the introduction of pure water from Lake Cochituate; a holiday never to be forgotten by the youth of our public schools, who at noon were drawn up in line, under white silk banners, on the Tremont-Street mall of the Common, as the civic procession passed by; falling in behind, afterwards, to join the assembled crowd at the Frog Pond and sing their ode, "My name is Water," when the fountain jet was let on late in the afternoon. That same evening private houses throughout the city were illuminated in the windows by small bottle lamps which held wicks and whale oil; and those same lamps served politically a few evenings after, with scarcely less lustre, to welcome the grand Taylor and Fillmore torch-light parade.

While it is certain that Lincoln's speech at Tremont Temple was in all respects a success, holding the large audience assembled there in close attention to a late hour, no real report of it was given in the next day's papers. This, however, seems to have been owing to an unusual pressure of other matter seeking space in the columns of that Saturday's issue; and because, too, the speech of Seward that evening, unusually thoughtful and suggestive, was what the Whigs had come mainly to hear or wished to read reported. Lincoln, in course of his remarks here and elsewhere, made many happy hits at



our "conscience Whigs," whose defection seems to have caused the chief anxiety of the Massachusetts canvass; but though such derision made much merriment and applause in the audience, there appears no proof that he let himself go with stories and high-flavored allusions, as he had lately done in Congress while discussing Cass, the Democratic candidate. On the contrary, he seems to have repressed such tendencies while in Massachusetts, and to have made his strong points with something of sobriety to suit cultured audiences.

In point of fact the first and initial speech of this visit, which Lincoln made at Worcester, contained the substance of all his subsequent orations while on this brief visit; and that speech borrowed its main argument from his remarks in July on the floor of Congress. That Worcester address of September 12 was well reported the next day in several of our Boston papers; the "Advertiser" report being, indeed, so full and satisfactory that it has gone word for word into the posthumous edition of Abraham Lincoln's works; for Lincoln himself left no note of any speeches made during this campaign. And thus we perceive, first of all, that this self-trained orator from the West, when coming among our more conventional people of the East, felt a certain constraint as to modes of expression, such as he showed again in 1860 when in New York City. For, as the "Advertiser" of September 14, 1848, reports, he opened his Worcester speech with somewhat deprecating humor, announcing his diffidence in addressing an audience "this side of the mountains," where, as those of his own section believed, "everybody was supposed to be instructed and wise."

Quaint idioms and droll turns of expression gave doubtless a piquancy and zest to Lincoln's utterances on this tour, while all his flings of fun at the opposition were good-natured. Yet if he really felt during his visit in a racy and rollicking mood, it was probably on the last appearance at Tremont Temple; for by that time he was familiar with the fibre of his argument as well as with the moods of a Massachusetts Whig audience. Yet the only jocular remarks in these ten days' speeches which are really in evidence are two. According to the "Advertiser," when speaking of the Free-soil platform, — a non-committal one upon all points except as to slave extension, — he likened its adaptability of principles to the pair of pantaloons offered



for sale by a peddler which were "large enough for any man, small enough for any boy."<sup>1</sup> And again the "Boston Courier" of September 23 reports an allusion which he made in his Boston speech to the Free-soil supporters of Van Buren as "pseudo-Whigs" who had "hitched themselves on the skirts of that 'artful dodger' of Kinderhook."

Lincoln's logic, here as always, took a plain and original line, and carried conviction to his hearers; yet in 1848 it was not wholly devoid of casuistry. The Whig candidate had been curbed by his managers in letter-writing on political topics while the election was pending; hence opponents argued, not without pertinence, that General Taylor had no political principles at all. Against such a charge Lincoln defended the hero by arguing that Taylor had a principle, and that was that the people's will should be obeyed by a President and not frustrated by interposing the veto power. Such a candidate, he claimed, stands well in contrast with leaders like Clay, who tell us in advance what they think should be done, while "old rough and ready," reserved on such points, is content to act right when the time comes and allow the people, through their chosen representatives in Congress, to have their own way. As a matter of fact, Zachary Taylor proved as President to have an opinion of his own, and a decided one, on the chief issue of the day, and had he lived out his term Clay's compromise measures of 1850 would most likely have failed. So, again, Lincoln held up Van Buren as obsequious to his forceful master, Andrew Jackson, both in Texas annexation and the Mexican war; and this, again, was hardly just. Van Buren, as it proved, did the Whigs great service in this campaign by his Free-soil candidacy, for he thus diverted the Democratic vote of New York from Cass, the regular candidate of the party, and paid off neatly an old score of his own.

Massachusetts Whigs at this time wished the "Wilmot proviso," or ordinance of freedom, applied to all the new territory beyond the Rio Grande which we were wresting from Mexico; and their hope was well founded that Taylor would not veto any measure of that kind which might pass Congress. Such was at this time the great national issue which divided North and South, antedating by only a few years, as it proved, the

<sup>1</sup> 2 Proceedings, ii. 416.

struggle over free territory whose renewal under other auspices tolled the death knell of American slavery. Lincoln felt deeply on this territorial issue in 1848, yet not so deeply as he came to feel when that same issue arose again. As to slavery, he said in his Worcester speech that the people of Illinois agreed entirely with the people of Massachusetts on this subject, except perhaps that they did not keep so constantly thinking about it. Seward's speech at Tremont Temple, however,—which "The Boston Daily Atlas" the next day, the 23d, reported fully,—struck the keynote of a bolder utterance, and tradition relates that Lincoln gained inspiration from it.<sup>1</sup> Seward proclaimed on this occasion that the time would come, and that too in his day, when the free people would free the slaves of this country. This, however, he added with less of prophetic foresight, would be accomplished by moral force—by paying a national remuneration for so great a blessing.

We would gladly know, but we cannot find out, what were the attendant circumstances of this ten days' visit of Abraham Lincoln to Boston and its neighborhood. Current chronicle fails frequently to comprehend what details of the present are most likely to interest a coming generation. How our great leader of later years employed his leisure while among us, where he lodged,<sup>2</sup> with whom he affiliated, how socially he employed his time, what Boston thought of him personally or he of Boston,—on all such points as these we are left in inevitable doubt. The Boston press of 1848 was not given to idle gossip over the private relations of people; nor had that convenient custom of interviewing noted guests and visitors come so early into vogue. Quite likely the giant form of our Illinois statesman was seen strolling on Boston Common, or exploring our historic buildings, or gazing upward at the new

<sup>1</sup> J. Schouler, *History of the United States*, v. 112, note.

<sup>2</sup> Since this paper was read, I have been referred to an interesting letter by "Templeton" in "The Boston [Sunday] Herald" of April 26, 1885, page 13. It was written from personal recollection by George Harris Monroe, who was before his death a Resident Member of our Historical Society. His description of 1848 relates particularly to the orator's afternoon visit and speech at Dedham, preceding the evening engagement for Cambridge. It would appear from this letter that Lincoln made the Tremont House his headquarters while in Boston. It was there that the Norfolk County Whig Committee, of which Mr. Monroe was a member, visited him and procured his attendance.

granite shaft of Bunker Hill. Perhaps on some leisure occasion he dropped in at the Museum to see one of those protean performances in which Warren figured, or at darkened Amory Hall enjoyed Bayne's panoramic Voyage to Europe with its pianoforte interludes and a storm at sea. At Worcester he very likely met Levi Lincoln and Senator John Davis, while at the convention in that city he must have listened to the Whig eloquence of Choate and Winthrop. Perhaps he called upon the last-named when in Boston, to pay his respects, for Winthrop was at this time Speaker of the House at Washington, and owed his single Illinois vote for that post to our present sojourner. Josiah Quincy, Jr., the mayor of Boston this year, was a man of marked politeness and urbanity, and from him our visitor may have received attentions. But Lincoln is not reported as present personally at the Horticultural banquet, though Seward was there and managed to speak both at Faneuil Hall and Tremont Temple that same Friday evening, the 22d. Of the Adamses Lincoln probably saw little, for Charles Francis Adams was running for Vice-President on that same Van Buren ticket which our orator aspersed so freely. Nor could he have come very close to Webster, for that god-like of men still sulked at Marshfield over General Taylor's nomination, pronouncing it not fit to be made.

In those Whig days so many prominent families of Massachusetts were identified with active politics in one way or another that some fellow-members of this Society may have traditions to impart regarding Lincoln's visit of 1848; and if so, their statements ought to be taken for permanent record before all such recollections pass into oblivion. I have a paternal incident of the kind, and I venture to relate it. In 1848 William Schouler was editor and publisher of "The Boston Daily Atlas," a leading Whig organ of New England in its day which perished with the Whig party itself. The counting-room of the "Atlas," as I well remember, was in the Old State House; while its printing and editorial rooms occupied a gloomy brick building in the rear of that dingy but historic alley running from the old Court House to Cornhill, which to this day bears the imposing name of Franklin Avenue. Down that dingy alley and into the gloomy brick building strode Abraham Lincoln one day, in the course of his present visit, and, toiling up the dark staircase, made a call upon this "Atlas"



editor to have a free talk with him over the national outlook. This talk he recalled with jocular comment when domiciled at the White House in 1861. I still hold in family possession two letters<sup>1</sup> which Lincoln wrote to "Friend Schooler" from Washington shortly before he came to Massachusetts in 1848; and a third, still more familiar in tone, was mailed from Washington soon after Taylor's election, and I find it printed in the posthumous collection of Lincoln's works. Doubtless that last letter made its way back into the writer's own hands on the White House occasion to which I allude.

<sup>1</sup> The letters above referred to, hitherto unpublished, which Abraham Lincoln wrote while a member of Congress, are as follows :

WASHINGTON, August 8, 1848.

FRIEND SCHOOLER, — I am remaining here for two weeks to frank documents. Now that the Presidential candidates are all set, I will thank you for your undisguised opinion as to what New England generally and Massachusetts particularly will do. Your opinion as to the nomination of Taylor held so good that I have confidence in your predictions. Very truly yours,

A. LINCOLN.

WASHINGTON, August 28, 1848.

FRIEND SCHOOLER, — Your letter of the 21st was received two or three days ago, and for which please accept my thanks, both for your courtesy and the encouraging news in it. The news we are receiving here now from all parts is on the look-up. We have had several letters from Ohio to-day, all encouraging. Two of them inform us that Hon. C. B. Smith, on his way here, addressed a larger and more enthusiastic audience, at Cincinnati, than has been seen in that city since 1840. Smith himself wrote one of the letters; and he says the signs are decidedly good. Letters from the Reserve are of the same character. The tone of the letters — free from despondency — full of hope — is what particularly encourages me. If a man is scared when he writes, I think I can detect it, when I see what he writes.

I would rather not be put upon explaining how Logan was defeated in my district. In the first place I have no particulars from there, my friends, supposing I am on the road home, not having written me. Whether there was a full turn out of the voters I have as yet not learned. The most I can now say is that a good many Whigs, without good cause, as I think, were unwilling to go for Logan, and some of them so wrote me before the election. On the other hand Harris was a Major of the war, and fought at Cerro Gordo, where several Whigs of the district fought with him. These two facts and their effects, I presume tell the whole story. That there is any political change against us in the district I cannot believe; because I wrote some time ago to every county of the district for an account of changes; and, in answer I got the names of four against us, eighty-three for us. I dislike to predict, but it seems to me the district must and will be found right side up again in November. Yours truly,

A. LINCOLN.

The third letter to "Friend Schooler," dated from Washington, February 2, 1849, is published in Abraham Lincoln's Works, by J. G. Nicolay and J. Hay, i. 149; and evidently the editors could not identify the recipient.



Such, then, is the narrative, so far as I am able to construct it, of the only political visit to this vicinity — and in truth of the only genuine visit at all — ever made by that fellow-citizen and stranger from the West whose name in twenty years was to ring down the grooves of time. On this point I am confirmed by his eminent son, Hon. Robert Todd Lincoln, from whom I have lately received three letters on the present subject, which I am permitted to print with this paper.<sup>1</sup> That son went through Harvard during the era of our Civil War, but the President, his father, never came to Massachusetts to

<sup>1</sup> The three letters received by me from Hon. Robert T. Lincoln are as follows :

AUGUSTA, GEORGIA, December 27, 1907.

MY DEAR SIR, — Your letter of the 19th instant comes to me here, accompanied by some memoranda from my secretary in Chicago, Mr. Sweet, who was able at once to lay his hands upon some correspondence which enables me to answer your inquiry with certainty.

I can say at once that you are entirely correct in your supposition that my father's speech in Boston in 1848 was made on the only political visit that he ever made to Boston. I am quite sure of this. He never came to Boston in connection with my course of education at Harvard, but he made a visit\* to New England in the winter of 1860 in order to visit me at Exeter, N. H., where I was then a student in the Phillips Academy.

The circumstances and principal instances of the visit are as follows : At the time he made his speech at the Cooper Institute in New York in February, 1860, he mentioned to several people that he had no further plans except to visit me at Exeter, where I had gone six months before to prepare for the entrance examinations of Harvard in the summer of 1860. In consequence he was requested to make a speech at Providence, R. I., which he did on February 28th. He then went to Exeter, N. H., to see me, and I think he spoke there on the night of February 29th. I remember the occasion very well, but am not entirely sure of the date. It could be learned easily by examination of the files of the Exeter News Letter. On March 1st he spoke in the afternoon at Concord, N. H., and in the evening at Manchester, N. H. On the evening of March 2nd he spoke at Dover, N. H. I was with him on this little New Hampshire tour. He returned to Exeter, spending Sunday, March 4th, with me, and proceeded on his homeward journey making the following speeches : March 5th, Hartford, Ct. ; March 6th, Meriden, Ct. ; March 7th, New Haven, Ct. ; March 8th, Woonsocket, R. I. ; March 9th, Norwalk, Ct. ; March 10th, Bridgeport, Ct. I am quite sure that in coming and going he passed through Boston merely as an unknown traveller.

Believe me,

Very truly yours,

ROBERT T. LINCOLN.

CHICAGO, January 29, 1908.

MY DEAR SIR, — I duly received your note of the 1st of January and did not acknowledge it because in it you state that you would make use of my letter unless you heard from me to the contrary. I have, of course, no objection to the use of the facts I gave in it.

Since then I have come across a letter written by my father to my mother on

see him there. He did, however, as a private citizen, make the son a visit at Exeter, while the latter was fitting there for college in 1860, journeying thither from New York City on February 27 of that year, after making his speech at the Cooper Institute. This parental visit gave occasion for various speeches in New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Connecticut, before the return in March to Illinois.

But Lincoln did not speak in Massachusetts at all on that latter tour to New England, and he passed through Boston, if he passed at all, only as a casual and unknown traveller. For this, I think, there was some special reason; and I impute it to the fact that the Republicans of Massachusetts held their

March 4th, at Exeter, N. H., in which he wrote to her of what he had already done, and of his engagements up to and including the speech to be made at Woonsocket, R. I., on Thursday March 8th. This makes up nine speeches after his New York speech, and is the list which he refers to in what I will now quote to you. "I have been unable to escape this toil. If I had foreseen it, I think I would not have come east at all. The speech at New York, being within my calculation before I started, went off passably well and gave me no trouble whatever. The difficulty was to make nine others, before reading audiences who had already seen all my ideas in print."

I think his comment on the work is interesting in view of the effect which was being made upon his future career without thought of it by him, by his unanticipated speeches, which would not have been made but for his visit to a school boy. Believe me, Very sincerely yours,

ROBERT T. LINCOLN.

MANCHESTER, VT., October 22, 1908.

MY DEAR SIR, — I receive here your letter of October 17th, in which you ask if I can give you any information regarding my father's visit to Massachusetts in 1848. Of course I could have no personal recollection of the matter, for at that time I was only three years of age, and I am sorry to say that I have no other information on the subject which you do not already have.

Mr. Sweet, my assistant in Chicago, who is about as familiar with my personal affairs as I am myself, and in some respects more so, sends me your letter, saying that he has gone through my father's papers, but finds nothing in them relating to his visit to Massachusetts in 1848, except a paragraph in his autobiography in which he speaks of his advocacy of General Taylor's election and of his speaking several times in Massachusetts. You probably have access to this document yourself, but for your convenience I send you the copy which Mr. Sweet sent to me.

I am very sorry that I cannot give you any further information on the subject, but I do not know where I could obtain anything additional. Very truly yours,

ROBERT T. LINCOLN.

Extract from Abraham Lincoln's Autobiography enclosed: "In 1848, during his term in Congress, he advocated Gen. Taylor's nomination to the Presidency, in opposition to all others, and also took an active part for his election after his nomination, speaking a few times in Maryland, near Washington, several times in Massachusetts, and canvassing quite fully his own district in Illinois, which was followed by a majority in the district of over 1500 for Gen. Taylor."

convention at Worcester at this very time — namely, on the 7th of March — to nominate delegates at large for the national party convention which was to assemble at Chicago. Abraham Lincoln was invited to attend this convention of 1860 at Worcester, — renewing thus his political memories of 1848, — and the press announced him for an address at that gathering; but he pleaded engagements elsewhere and did not come. It happened that the favorite of this Massachusetts Republican convention was Seward, and Lincoln's invitation must have been extended to him without the remotest idea that he and not Seward would prove to be the party's nominee for the Presidency and lead to victory. But Lincoln's published correspondence shows that he already knew of the preparations his Illinois friends were making at home to place him before the convention at Chicago, when the time came, as irresistibly the candidate. Hence, as I infer, a sense of delicacy caused him to keep clear altogether of Massachusetts Republicans and their State convention at such a time.

The following unpublished letter of Lincoln to Mr. James is in the Washburn collection, in the manuscripts of the Society:

SPRINGFIELD, Feb. 9, 1846.

DEAR JAMES, — You have seen, or will see what I am inclined to think you will regard as rather an extraordinary communication in the Morgan Journal. The "excessive modesty" of its tone is certainly admirable. As an excuse for getting before the public, the writer sets out with a pretence of answering an article which I believe appeared in the Lacon paper some time since, taking the ground that the Pekin convention had settled the rotation principle. Now whether the Pekin convention did or did not settle that principle, I care not. If I am not, in what I *have done*, and am *able to do*, for the party, near enough the equal of Gen<sup>l</sup> Hardin, to entitle me to the nomination, now that he has one, I scorn it on *any* and *all* other grounds.

So far then, as this Morgan Journal communication may relate to the Pekin convention, I rather prefer that your paper shall let it "stink and die" unnoticed.

There is, however, as you will see, another thing in the communication which is an attempt to injure me because of my declining to recommend the adoption of a *new plan*, for the selecting a candidate. The attempt is to make it appear that I am unwilling to have a *fair* expression of the whigs of the District upon our respective claims. Now



nothing can be more false in fact; and if Gen<sup>l</sup> Hardin, had chosen to furnish his friend with my *written reason* for declining that part of his plan; and that friend had chosen to publish that *reason*, instead of his own construction of the act, the falsehood of his insinuation would have been most apparant. That written reason was as follows, towit:

“As to your proposals that a poll shall be opened in *every* precinct, and that the whole shall take place on the *same* day, I do not personally object. They seem to me to not be unfair; and I forbear to join in proposing them, only because I rather choose to leave the decision in each county, to the whigs of the county, to be made as their own judgment and convenience may dictate.”

I send you this as a weapon with which to demolish, what I can not but regard as a mean insinuation against me. You may use it as you please; I prefer however that you should show it to some of our friends, and not publish it, unless in your judgment it becomes rather urgently necessary. The reason I want to keep all points of controversy out of the papers, so far as possible, is, that it will be *just all we can do*, to keep out of a quarrel — and I am resolved to do my part to keep peace. Yours truly

A. LINCOLN.

[Addressed] B. F. JAMES, Tremont, Illinois.

Mr. RANTOUL spoke substantially as follows:

It seems to be expected, in this year of grace, that everybody who has any first-hand knowledge of Abraham Lincoln will share it with the public. I was visiting Washington in January, 1863, and saw Mr. Lincoln for the first time at a public reception in the East Room of the White House. When he got my card from the officer in attendance, he repeated the name to himself several times and then said: “I wonder if you are connected with a lawyer of that name who came to Illinois, about 1850, to secure from our legislature the charter of the Illinois Central Railroad?” I told him that was my father. Upon which he burst forth with a great roar of laughter and much gesticulation, and said that he did all he could to stop it, but was not successful. He said he was retained by local capitalists who, although they could not then build the road as they had already been intending, were very unwilling that eastern capitalists should step in and secure a grant which would make it forever impossible for them to build a road. But they were defeated. He favored me with some minutes of interesting conversation on this theme, and spoke with such



amused good-humor of the incident that my reception whetted rather than allayed my curiosity to see more of this extraordinary man. I had done what I could to help secure his election in 1860, and had, five years before that date, been active in the organization of the Republican party of Massachusetts. I may add that I saw Mr. Lincoln a number of times after that day.

Our Essex Congressman at that time was John B. Alley, one of a little group of business men in Congress upon whose knowledge of financial matters Mr. Lincoln was much inclined to lean. The Boston Congressman, Samuel Hooper, was another of them. Mr. Alley asked me and Mr. Endicott, our associate member, who was in Washington at the time, if we would like to see Mr. Lincoln in the privacy of his own office and in absolute freedom from constraint. If so, he could readily secure an appointment with him at some early hour, before he put on his harness for the duties of the day. Of course we assented, and an interview was arranged. We met the President, only the three other persons named being present, in the little office where he had his war-maps and writing materials, but almost no furniture. A three-quarters-length portrait of President Jackson hung over the fireplace. Here Mr. Lincoln, in absolute disregard of all conventionalisms whether of speech or bearing, allowed his conversation to ramble on from topic to topic in a way that gave more insight into the workings of his mind than an hour passed in his presence under any other circumstances could have afforded.

I omit all reference to his very extraordinary personality, so often described and now familiar, except to note that he had a habit, constantly practised by Rufus Choate, of passing his right hand slowly around his head and through his unkempt hair, when actively engaged in thought. His clothing was in hopeless disorder, and I thought him then, and think him now, the most ungainly man I have ever seen. His features, not so familiar then as they are now, were strong, expressive, and sympathetic, and lighted up with intelligence and enthusiasm the moment his mind found itself in touch with another.

Much of the time of the interview was consumed in questioning me as to public men in Massachusetts. After renewing his inquiries about my father, who had died in 1852, he passed

to Rufus Choate, who had died in 1859, and in whom he seemed greatly interested. He then took up, in turn, Garrison and Wendell Phillips, — then living leaders of thought, — and, I think I am right in adding, Theodore Parker, who had died two years before. Upon all these he asked questions and made comments which showed so great an insight into the personal politics of our section as to be truly astonishing. After learning all I was able to tell of the attitude of these and some other Massachusetts men, and of the estimation in which they were held at home, he took up Robert C. Winthrop, and began to speak of him with an interest which amounted to enthusiasm. This surprised me, for the two men seemed to be the antipodes of one another. He told us that he had been travelling in New England on a professional or political errand, when he learned from the newspapers that by stopping over a day or two he would be able to attend a Whig State Convention in Massachusetts. The temptation was too great to be resisted. He had long been curious to see how these matters were conducted in Massachusetts, because, while he was sure our methods must be very different from those in use at the West, he had formed little idea what our methods were. Accordingly he indulged himself in a little delay, and was rewarded by listening to a speech of Mr. Winthrop in the convention,<sup>1</sup> which he pronounced without qualification to have been the best occasional address of the kind he had ever listened to before or since.<sup>2</sup> It should be said that he had known Mr. Winthrop in Washington. They were members of the same Congress, and Mr. Winthrop had been the Speaker of it. In fact, Lincoln might claim to have elected Winthrop to the Speakership, for he voted for Winthrop and the choice was decided by a single vote.

This kindly and enthusiastic reference, from the lips of the great man we are now commemorating, to the long-time President of this Society must excuse my occupying, with matters so largely personal, the attention of this meeting. And I think that the recital of these facts tends to throw a side-light on the political methods of Mr. Lincoln. If Mr. Lincoln knew as much of the personnel of local politics all over this broad

<sup>1</sup> This was the convention mentioned in Mr. Schouler's paper, 71, 72, *ante*.

<sup>2</sup> R. C. Winthrop, Jr., Memoir of Robert C. Winthrop, 87, 88.

domain as he knew of the personnel of local politics in Massachusetts, he had a genius for detail worthy of the first Napoleon. It lets us into the nature of the political training in which he was schooled and which stood him in such good stead after he had reached a height where he could, to a degree, forego personal politics and deal more largely with guiding principles and with men in the mass. It seems to show that, like an athlete, he had made himself strong by carefully taking the measure of his antagonists in all the stages of his progress, — first the lesser and then the greater, — and that he was keenly interested to know every seam and joint in the armor of any public man with whom he might possibly be called upon to break a lance.

Dr. GREEN read a paper, as follows :

OLD MILE-STONES LEADING FROM BOSTON.

The earliest legislation in this Commonwealth on the subject of guide-posts bears date February 28, 1795. At that time an Act was passed by the General Court requiring the selectmen of the several towns and districts, under certain conditions, to erect guide-posts at the corners and angles of all roads in such towns and districts; and imposing penalties for non-compliance with the law. Before that time, in a few towns, individuals had set up stones by the roadside, marking the distance and direction to some important town; and these persons often added their own initials, as well as the year when the stones were placed.

Numerous mile-stones are now to be found by roadsides on the way from Boston to Milton, Providence, and Cambridge. It is known that some of these stones were set up by Paul Dudley, Chief-Justice of the Province, as they bear his name or initials; and probably others were, though they do not bear them. In the eighteenth century it was not uncommon for a well-to-do man in the community to place mile-stones by the roadside along the main thoroughfares mostly for the convenience of wayfarers, but perhaps partly for his own glorification, as he often added his own initials to the inscriptions. In speaking of the Chief-Justice, our late associate Dr. Nathaniel B. Shurtleff says: "He was buried in the tomb of his fathers; but his epitaphs are only to be read on the numerous

